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EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER • March 2008, Vol.74 No.2

Dave Brown

VDOT's Aerial Acrobat, Page 4



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CONTRIBUTORS

Dee Brooking, Tina Bundy, Heidi Coy, Michelle Earl, Dawn Eischen, Tia Freeman, Dan Horvath, Paula Jones, Jennifer Krajewski, Ben Mannell, Shannon Marshall, Sandy Myers, Ann Overton, Mike Salmon, Steve Scherr, Angela White-Jenkins

STAFF

Chief of Communications: Jeffrey Caldwell

Managing Editor: Britt Drewes

Graphics: Wayne Minter, Robert Perry, Calvin Smith

Photography: Tom Saunders, Al Covey, Trevor Wrayton

Bulletin Editor
1401 E. Broad Street
Room 302
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 786-4243 (TTY/TDD, call 711)
Employeeenews@vdot.virginia.gov

If you are a VDOT retiree and want to change your address or to opt out of receiving the newsletter, please contact the editor using the information above.



Commissioner Ekern

Commissioner's Column

The Virginia Department of Transportation will plan, deliver, operate and maintain a transportation system that is safe, enables easy movement of people and goods, enhances the economy and improves our quality of life.

It's hard to capture all that we do into one statement. However, it's that one sentence, our mission statement that guides our work and explains our commitment to our customers – Virginia's motorists.

We have a tremendous responsibility – to safely connect all Virginians with the important things in their lives. Each of us has an important role in living this mission. Whether you are delivering motorists from one shore to another on a ferry in Hampton Roads, helping a stranded motorist in Bristol change a tire, processing payrolls or paying VDOT invoices and bills, you are helping make Virginia's transportation system the best it can be.

Our mission is driven by customer demand – just like any private business. Virginia's motorists tell us in

our customer satisfaction surveys that a safe and convenient transportation system is a priority.

It doesn't matter whether a motorist lives in a rural or urban area of the state - an efficient and safe transportation system has direct impact on their quality of life - keeping costs down and value up. Our mission also reinforces our obligation to plan for the future of Virginia, protect our environment, and provide projects and services on time and on budget.

It also has a direct impact on the state's and nation's economy. Products and goods are carried into each and every community in Virginia using the interstates, primary and secondary roads that we build and maintain. These goods fuel Virginia's economy and the quality of life around the globe.

Now more than ever we must work together, stay committed and approach every project with innovation and a fresh perspective. Together we can achieve our mission and create the strongest and safest transportation system in the nation.

David S. Ekern

FEATURES



Salem District Manager Gives Locks of Love

Many people in Salem District know Equipment Repair Manager **Kim Kristensen** by his friendly smile and long dark pony tail. Today the hair is shorter but the smile is bigger. He recently donated more than 10 inches of his hair to Locks of Love.

"Giving is easy. I don't have to do anything. It doesn't cost me anything," said Kristensen.

Locks of Love is a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children suffering from long-term medical hair loss. The group takes donations of hair that is 10 inches or longer.

This is the second time Kristensen, a firm believer in giving back to those around him, has donated hair to Locks of Love. It takes him up to three years to let his hair grow long enough to be donated.

"I just think of these kids that don't have hair at all, and that would be kinda rough as a child, and so for them to get natural hair, I think would be nice," says Kristensen.

Through Locks of Love and other volunteer organizations, Kristensen hopes to lead by example, encouraging others to give back to their community.

"I encourage everyone to give back where they can," he said.

—Heidi Coy, Salem District



Chamberlain Triplets Give VDOT 120 Years of Service

Bobby, Fred and Phil Chamberlain share more than the same birthday. Collectively, they have more than 120 years of materials experience in the Richmond District. Two of the brothers, Phil and Bobby, recently retired in January, while the "oldest," Fred, retired in 2004.

These McKenney, Va. natives started their VDOT careers in the early 60s when the agency was called the Virginia Department of Highways. Phil and Bobby conducted soil surveys, and Fred worked in the Materials Soil Laboratory. During their careers, they stopped working at the district briefly to serve two years in the Army. They returned to the Richmond District to work in just about every section in materials until their retirement.

Being identical triplets working in the same department has caused some confusion. They recalled when former Commissioner Harold King visited their office and couldn't believe they were triplets. Sometimes their colleagues would accidentally speak to one brother when they meant to speak to another. The Chamberlains would laugh it off and direct them to the correct brother.

"Bobby, Phil and Fred served VDOT and the commonwealth in an outstanding manner and always presented themselves in a very respectable fashion, just as they do in their personal lives," said former supervisor, Jerry Schiff, who also recently retired.

— Dawn Eischen, Richmond District



Dashboard 3.0 Gives More Layers of Performance Info

VDOT customers have a new tool — Dashboard 3.0. The improved Dashboard builds upon previous versions and adds new ways to report our progress in planning, operating, building and maintaining the commonwealth's transportation system.

In March 2003, VDOT launched Dashboard to provide customers with its performance records for construction and maintenance projects. In 2005, the agency released the second generation, which added maintenance projects, plans, studies, finances, safety and operations. Now, Dashboard 3.0 includes reports for system performance, condition, management and citizen survey results.

Not only does the new Dashboard help ensure transparency but also helps employees manage projects more efficiently. "The new home screen provides me with a one-stop shop to review the performance measures beyond just project delivery. I also use it to determine if there is anything I can do to make a difference for other areas," said Kenneth Shirley, P.E., Culpeper District construction engineer.

Since VDOT began focusing on Dashboard goals, performance greatly improved for project scheduling and financial management. In 2007, VDOT achieved, for the first time, all its goals for on-time, on-budget delivery of construction and maintenance projects.

Dashboard launched to the public on www.VirginiaDOT.org in February. It's also available through InsideVDOT.

EMPLOYEE NEWS

DAVE BROWN: AERIAL ACROBAT PILOT

When Dave Brown gets outside the office, he goes into the wild blue yonder



Left:

Dave Brown keeps an exact replica of his plane at his Northern Virginia Office

Safety is universal, whether it's dispatching snowplows out in a zero-visibility storm or landing a Standard Stearman biplane at 70 miles per hour. As a pilot and a VDOT Program Manager, **Dave Brown** stresses safety. In the cockpit, "everything is thought out and safety procedures followed," Brown said. "That's the same as running this snow equipment, same as on the road."

Brown's pilot aspirations kicked in right out of school so he joined the Air Force. His eyesight wasn't perfect so he ended up working as a missile launch officer before joining VDOT. Somewhere along the way, Brown met other pilots, bought his biplane and ended up in the Flying Circus, doing aerial acrobatics and giving

people rides just to keep the airplane's gas tank full. "I always see myself as a frustrated fighter pilot," Brown said.

Brown's plane is an Army trainer built in December 1941 just after Pearl Harbor and used throughout World War II. It's painted in official Army Air Corps colors with a blue fuselage, yellow wings and a red and white striped rudder.

From the cockpit, he leans his head out the side, like many of the old barnstormers in the movies, for a reason. "You can't see out the front of it," he said. Over the side, he looks down on many of the road projects in his district that he only knows on paper.

"It does give you a unique perspective of where things are located," he said.

One of his favorite landmarks is the salt dome at VDOT's Bealton AHQ, marking his turn for the approach to the landing strip. "Every time, I make that turn, I'm right over the salt dome," he said, "The salt dome is easy to see."

In 2004, Brown had the honor of flying the Stearman in the U.S. Air Force Memorial dedication. On another occasion, Brown got to fly with a USAF Thunderbirds pilot, taking the controls of a fighter jet for a while.

- Mike Salmon, Northern Virginia

MEET DEANNA DAVENPORT, new Payroll Accountant in the Hampton Roads District

Deanna Davenport has spent most of her life in Hampton Roads, but is new to the VDOT's Hampton Roads District. She joined in January 2008 as its payroll accountant.

With a wealth of accounting and management experience, Davenport has hit the ground running, helping site payroll administrators across the district manage staff payroll, short-term disability and more. She previously served as an accounting manager at Landmark Aviation and has more than 22 years of accounting experience.

Davenport was commuting 70 miles to work every day, and with her children, two-year-old

Justin and seven-year-old Kami, growing up fast, it wasn't easy. "I now work one mile away from my children," said Davenport. "Joining VDOT has helped improve my quality of life."

Outside of the office, Davenport spends a great deal of time with her family. In addition to Justin and Kami, she has a husband and three stepchildren. Davenport is also involved in the ministry at her church.

If that weren't enough to keep her busy, Davenport is also paving the way to get several accounting certifications and considering getting her master's degree.



PROFESSIONAL NOTES

RETIREMENTS

Linwood R. Adams
Transport Operations Manager I
Richmond, 26 years of service

James R. Barrett
Prog Admin Specialist III
Central Office, 41 years of service

William G. Beuter
Trainer Instructor III
Central Office, 34 years of service

Jenny M. Brewbaker
Prog Admin Manager II
Central Office, 34 years of service

W.C. Broughman
Engineering Technician III
Salem, 40 years of service

Timothy B. Brown
Prog Admin Manager II
Central Office, 32 years of service

Millard T. Brown, Jr.
Transport Operations Manager III
Northern Virginia, 16 years of service

John F. Bruen
Prog Admin Manager II
Central Office, 13 years of service

Bobby R. Burke
Equipmt Serv Repair Tech I
Culpeper, 42 years of service

Philip S. Chamberlain, Jr.
Engineering Technician III
Richmond, 44 years of service

Robert M. Chamberlain
Engineering Technician III
Richmond, 43 years of service

Donald R. Clark
Admin and Office Spec III
Salem, 35 years of service

Billy H. Clatterbuck
Engineering Technician III
Culpeper, 42 years of service

John T. Clatterbuck
Equipmt Serv Repair Tech I
Culpeper, 37 years of service

James W. Clore, Jr.
Transport Operations Manager II
Culpeper, 45 years of service

Leonard G. Dalton
Transportation Operator II
Salem, 31 years of service

Charles A. Dudley
Transportation Operator II
Culpeper, 30 years of service

Doris G. Epperly
Engineering Technician III
Central Office, 46 years of service

Paul J. Fowler, Jr.
Lnd Acq & Prop Mgmt Agent II
Hampton Roads, 51 years of service

J.R. Gray
Arch/Engring Mgr II
Northern Virginia, 42 years of service

Dale H. Grigg, Jr.
Arch/Engring Mgr II
Lynchburg, 36 years of service

William P. Harrell
Arch/Engring Mgr II
Northern Virginia, 30 years of service

Lewis S. Hester
Gen Admin Manager II
Central Office, 48 years of service

J.D. Hill
Transport Operations Manager III
Salem, 45 years of service

Gene Hull
Gen Admin Manager II
Northern Virginia, 51 years of service

Ernest C. Landes, III
Transportation Operator II
Culpeper, 27 years of service

Michael E. Link
Transportation Operator II
Salem, 31 years of service

Samuel R. Linkenhoker
Transport Opertns Manager II
Salem, 36 years of service

Elizabeth C. Mack
Scientist I
Central Office, 35 years of service

Hurley F. Minish
Architect/Engineer I
Central Office, 35 years of service

James R. Montgomery
Admin and Office Spec II
Fredricksburg, 30 years of service

James M. Owhalan, Sr.
Transportation Operator II
Northern Virginia, 22 years of service

R. G. Pugh
Architect/Engineer I
Central Office, 38 years of service

Junior P. Rouse
Engineering Technician III
Bristol, 37 years of service

Charles E. Scott, Jr.
Transportation Operator II
Bristol, 37 years of service

Betty N. Shell
Admin and Office Spec III
Richmond, 40 years of service

Donald I. Smith
Transportation Operator II
Northern Virginia, 34 years of service

Donald E. Sprouse
Gen Admin Manager II
Staunton, 41 years of service

Mary C. Tatum
Gen Admin Supv I/Coord I
Richmond, 37 years of service

Gayle E. Welch
Transportation Operator II
Salem, 32 years of service

Evelyn K. Wells
Auditor I
Central Office, 14 years of service

Shirley N. Wells
Admin and Office Spec III
Richmond, 39 years of service

Andrew J. Williams
Lnd Acq & Prop Mgmt Agent III
Northern Virginia, 41 years of service

Sandra C. Wood
Admin and Office Spec II
Central Office, 42 years of service

Clarence L. Zimmerman
Electronic Technician II
Hampton Roads, 21 years of service

OBITUARIES

Edward L. Byers
69, transportation operator II,
Culpeper District

Fred Clemmer
73, survey levelman,
Staunton District

Randolph Lloyd
62, transportation maintenance
crew member, Richmond District

CAREER MOVES / PROFESSIONAL NOTES

Rick Barnett
named statewide SAAP
coordinator, Central Office

Brandon Bennett
named contract administrator,
Bristol District

Bill Crapser
Central Office, passed his
certified project management
professional exam.

Sandra Elliott
named construction project
manager, Salem District

Jimmy Haralson
named construction project
manager, Salem District

Stacy Keith
named construction project
manager, Salem District

William E. "Bill" Lewis
named manager of Roadside
Management, Lynchburg District

Jerry McCray, Jr.
named engineering technician II,
Staunton District

Stephen McKeever
named assistant residency
administrator for the Jonesville
Residency, Bristol District

Kenneth McKinna,
Hampton Roads, passed the
professional engineer's exam

Robert Ratliff
Bristol District, passed the
professional engineer's exam

Patrick Rodgers
named construction project
manager, Salem District

Fred Washington
named general accounting
manager, Central Office

CORRECTIONS

Lillie Doggett
retired from the Fredericksburg District

Oliver W. Williams
retired from the Hampton Roads District

Around the State



NORTHERN VIRGINIA DISTRICT

In late January, battling the predictions of snow, the Northern Virginia District broke ground with Leesburg officials on a three-fourth-mile extension of Battlefield Parkway, thrilling commuters and nearby residents alike. It will be a critical link in transportation around the town.

The project, featuring a bridge and bike trail, will be completed in September 2009 through a design-build program that expedites the procedure. Leesburg Mayor Kristen Umstattd "couldn't be happier with everything VDOT has done to get this thing to be a 'go'," she said.



CULPEPER DISTRICT

Lane Alexander's positive attitude stands out when you first meet the Culpeper District's new security and technology specialist who recently joined VDOT through its Wounded Veterans Internship Program. Disabled by severe back problems, the 20-year Air Force veteran refers to the three years that followed his discharge in 2005 as "a humbling experience." It made him appreciate so many things previously taken for granted, such as being pain-free and able to run and exercise.

"If not for my sickness however, I would never have had this new opportunity (with VDOT)," said Alexander. He will serve as liaison between VDOT and VITA, bringing a wealth of knowledge of information technology systems and issues to the position – including 14 years of IT management.



SALEM DISTRICT

Approximately 40 Salem District employees attended an education fair in January to learn more about VDOT's Learning Partnership Program and opportunities for higher education. Ten colleges and universities provided information to employees on opportunities to earn associate's, bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees. The Learning Partnership Program was developed to encourage and support employees in enhancing their knowledge and skills to provide high-quality transportation solutions for the commonwealth. "The education fair provides a one-stop shop for employees to get more information about the Learning Partnership Program and compare a number of college programs at the same time," said Salem District Training Manager **Donna Graham**.

RESEARCH COUNCIL

Virginia Transportation Research Council staff received awards at the 87th Transportation Research Board meeting.

Shabbir Hossain, Steve Lane and Benjamin Schmidt: First place for "Use of the Micro-Deval Test for Assessing Fine Aggregate Durability."

Ilona Kastenhofer: Best paper for "What Is at Stake? Examination of VDOT's Land-Development Functions."

David Mokarem and Michael Sprinkel: Practice-ready award for "Performance Evaluation of Bonded Concrete Pavement Overlays after 11 Years."

Kevin McGhee with Trenton Clark: Poster award based on their paper "A Cost Comparison Methodology for Selecting Appropriate Asphalt Concrete Mixes."

INNOVATIVE FINANCE DIVISION

The Reston E-ZPass Customer Service Center closed last month.

Customers are encouraged to visit www.ezpassva.com or call (877) 762-7824 for assistance.

A temporary center with limited services has opened at 21641 Beaumeade Circle, Suite 322, in Ashburn. Customers can open accounts, make payments and receive and exchange transponders. Hours are 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Innovative Finance decided to move the center to reduce operating costs. A new, permanent location will be announced this spring.

E-ZPass also has service centers in Richmond and Gloucester Point.

HAMPTON ROADS DISTRICT

Developing future leaders and providing workplace opportunities is very important to the Hampton Roads District.

Last year, the district implemented the Leadership Development Curriculum under the direction of Learning and Development Manager **Eric Coleman** and Training and Development Coordinator **Sheryl Scott**.

This year-long program focuses on leadership and technical competencies.

The program was such a success that the district is recruiting new participants for the second Leadership Development Curriculum beginning in May.

Many employees who were turned away last year are excited at having another chance to participate.

Around the State

LEARNING CENTER – TRAINING ACADEMY

The VDOT Learning Center-Training Academy in Thornburg has two new training videos:

"Safe Chipper Operation: Considerations and Procedures"

"Patching Potholes: Best Practices of Permanent Pothole Repair"

VHS or DVD copies are available by e-mailing academy@vdot.virginia.gov or calling (540) 582-7300.

Also, an e-learning module is available on the VDOT University Virtual Campus on "Spreader Calibration."

POLICY DIVISION

Sunshine Week is March 16 through 22. It's a national initiative emphasizing the importance of open government and access to information.

Virginia kicks off the week by observing Freedom of Information Day on March 16.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides access to public records.

VDOT has a comprehensive FOIA program, developed in 2005, that includes:

- FOIA coordinators in each district and division
- A "FOIA Tracker": an information-management program to monitor the progress of requests
- FOIA training to promote consistency and efficiency statewide

WORKFORCE SAFETY AND HEALTH DIVISION

Injured? If you have been injured on or off the job, don't wait to get the help and benefits you need to initiate the Return to Work process so you can get back to work faster. The Workforce Safety and Health Division, in collaboration with Human Resources, is launching a poster campaign to remind you of the necessary steps to initiate the Return to Work process. If you have any questions about the Return to Work program, call the Return to Work coordinator in your area.

RICHMOND DISTRICT

The Sandston Residency is testing a new product to seal failed joints in a drainage system in New Kent County. Several eight-foot sections of a concrete pipe weren't properly sealed during installation, which caused soil to enter the drainage system and created sinkholes. Currently joint-failures require digging and replacing or completely relining of the structure. The product, HydraTite Seals, is an internal, trenchless method of repairing joint failures, and any storm drain large enough for a man to enter can use it. The product uses a rubber seal held in place with stainless steel bands, then expanded to hold the seal in place. It's more economical and causes less disruption during installation.

STAUNTON DISTRICT

The Lexington Residency has moved to new offices just off Route 39 near the Virginia Horse Center.

The 5,000 square-foot building houses administrative staff, residency and bridge inspectors, and an environmental monitor.

There are two conference rooms. The largest has video conferencing and can seat 34 or be divided into two rooms. The second can seat 13.

There are 17 parking spots plus two handicap spaces.

Susan Hammond is the residency administrator and **Mike Henry** is the assistant administrator.

BRISTOL DISTRICT

March Madness hits Bristol in the form of NASCAR, bringing about 165,000 fans.

Traffic counts show 650,000 vehicles in the area for a race. Typically, a third of them use Virginia's interstates.

Thanks to VDOT and other agencies, Bristol Motor Speedway sets the traffic coordination benchmark for race venues its size.

"Professionals from Atlanta, Fort Worth and California have studied the methods we use to move fans as safely and quickly as we possibly can," said speedway president Jeff Byrd. "It's truly a model every facility would love to emulate."

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

VDOT has exceeded our 2007 CVC goal of \$304,000 with a total of \$304,912. This marks our best campaign and the first time we've exceeded \$300,000!

VDOT also achieved 67 percent participation in the Governor's Healthy Virginians initiative for the quarter that ended Dec. 31, 2007. This is our best participation ever. VDOT wellness coordinators and employees deserve a big round of applause.

The current program is Sharpening Your Brain. Details can be found on www.commonhealthva.com.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY PLANNING DIVISION

The Federal Highway Administration is conducting a year-long National Household Travel Survey.

The Transportation and Mobility Planning Division wants you to know that many households in Virginia will be contacted by telephone and asked to participate in the anonymous survey.

It's estimated that as many as 300,000 households will be called. Citizens may call VDOT to confirm that the survey is valid.

The survey began March 1 and will continue through Feb. 28, 2009. Results will provide critical information on the public's transportation choices and habits nationwide.

FREDERICKSBURG DISTRICT

VDOT and the Virginia Department of Military Affairs have signed a memorandum of understanding allowing a National Guard unit to use a portion of a parking lot at the Fredericksburg District to house military vehicles and equipment.

"Both VDOT and the Guard will benefit," said **David E. Ogle**, Fredericksburg district administrator. "By partnering, we can coordinate our response to major weather events, natural disasters and local, state and national emergencies."

The space will also address the Guard's need to house more vehicles at its current location off of Route 1.

THE INBOX

JLARC Seeks Input on Compensation

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), the oversight agency of the Virginia General Assembly, is asking classified, salaried state employees to take a survey about salaries and compensation.

JLARC will evaluate overall employee satisfaction with salaries and benefits and will assess whether changes should be considered to the current approach.

VDOT salaried, classified employees with a valid e-mail address should have received an electronic notification requesting participation in the survey. Online surveys need to be completed by mid-April.

If you are a salaried, classified VDOT employee without access to e-mail at work, you can participate in one of two ways:

- (1) Using any computer that has Internet access (such as one at home or at your local library) and using the following link - <http://survey.virginia.gov>
- (2) Completing and submitting a paper version of the survey that VDOT is making available to you. Instructions on how to get a copy of the paper survey will be communicated by your local Human Resources Office. If you elect to take the paper version, please submit your survey no later than March 21.

Deferred Comp Plan Info Coming

Great-West, administrator of the Commonwealth's Deferred Compensation Plan, has mailed letters to all VDOT employees who participate in the plan. The letters encourage participants to review current beneficiary designations.

Participants can easily view and update this information online at <https://vadcp.gwrs.com>. The mailing also includes a beneficiary form and a postage-paid return envelope to the Great-West home office. The letters were mailed on Feb. 29 to the employee's home address on file at Great-West.